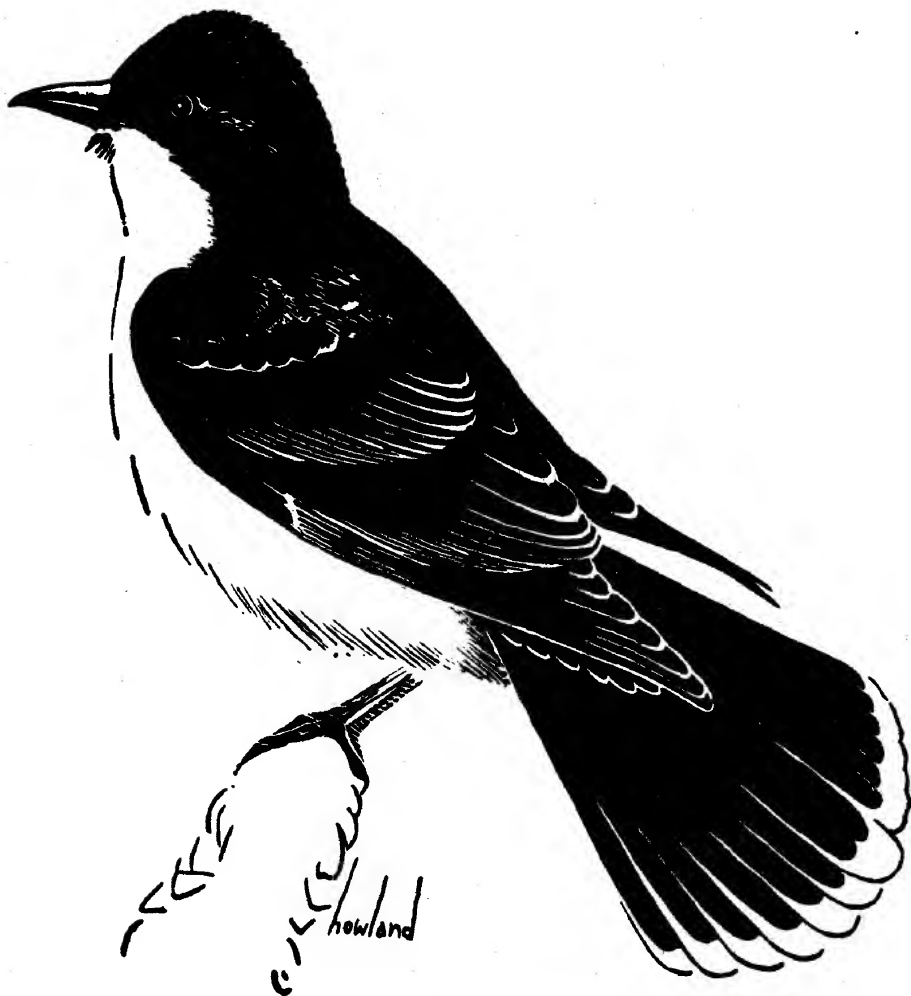


# *The* **KINGBIRD**



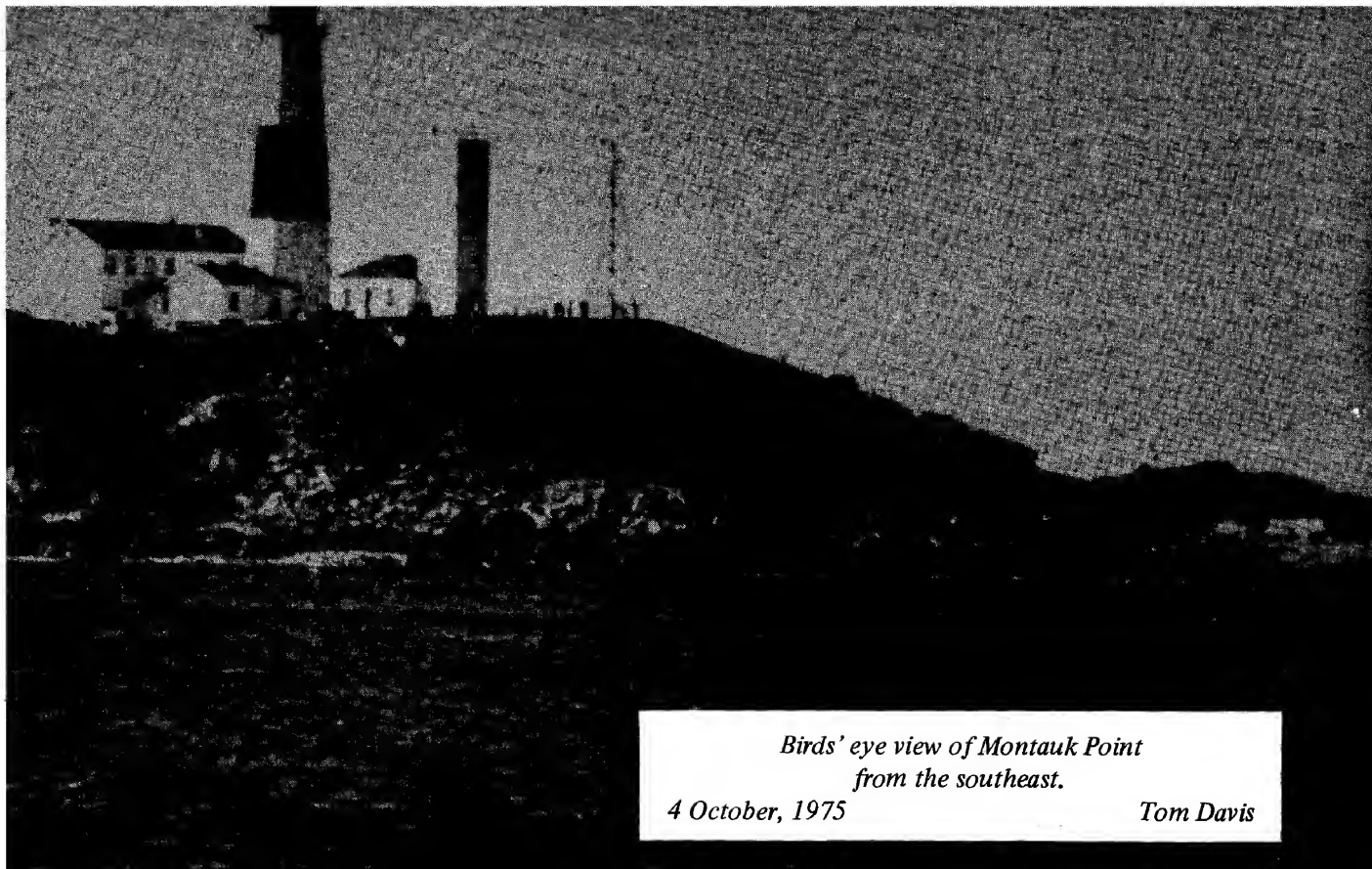
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*Birds' eye view of Montauk Point  
from the southeast.*

*4 October, 1975*

*Tom Davis*





colder waters of the Gulf of Maine, while the waters from Montauk Point to south of Block Island are Mid-Atlantic. In birds, this contrast is most evident in comparing numbers of Greater and Cory's Shearwaters at and away from the Ledge. Also, to the north of the barrier during the summer period, the water temperature is relatively constant, while the Mid-Atlantic Bight waters are variable. Year-to-year variations in water temperature at Cox's Ledge may be responsible for fluctuations in numbers of Greater and Cory's Shearwaters. None of the species listed on Table 3 breed south of Cox's Ledge along the U.S. coast while 11 species are found breeding to the north. Nine of the northern species breed north of the Canadian border while Manx Shearwater and Leach's Storm-Petrel breed south to the vicinity of Cape Cod (as does the Arctic Tern, as yet unrecorded on these trips). Six others are migrants from southern waters; of these the Cory's and Audubon's Shearwaters range only accidentally north of Cape Cod.

### THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

A description of the marine environment is essential to understanding the distribution of birds from Montauk Point to Cox's Ledge and the conditions in which they are observed. This description has been abstracted from Volume I of the *Final Environmental Statement for the Proposed 1977 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale Offshore the North Atlantic States OCS Sale No. 42*, prepared by the Bureau of Land Management for the U.S. Department of the Interior.

- I. Marine Geology: Cox's Ledge lies on the continental shelf, the natural seaward extension of the coastal plain. During the Pleistocene era most of the continental shelf south of Long Island and Cape Cod was exposed land beyond the glacial limit. With the retreat of the Laurentide ice sheet, beginning about 15,000 years ago, terminal moraines were deposited along a line stretching across Long Island and Georges Bank. Cox's Ledge lies along the outwash zone of this glacial front. The "rough bottom" at Cox's cited above includes boulders "as big as a house" (verb. comm., Paul Forsberg). Most of the bottom between Montauk Point and Cox's is sandy, with some deposits of gravel. The water depth at Cox's is 18-19 fathoms, 4 fathoms at Great Eastern Rock 2 miles east of Montauk Point, and the greatest depth in between is 31 fathoms (C & GS chart 1108, Approaches to NY).









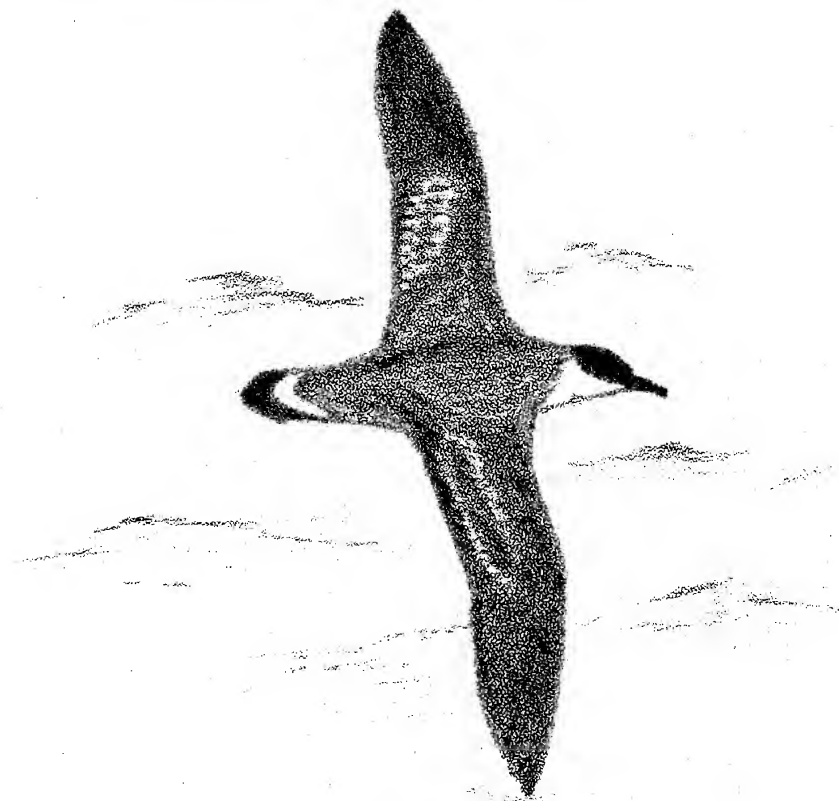






**Sooty Shearwater:** an inshore species, seen principally near Montauk Point.

**Greater Shearwater:** prefers the colder waters of Cox's Ledge. Will approach boat closely if chum, bait, or fish parts are proffered. Lands on water with wings held slightly out from body, then surface dives, wings open, for as long as 10-15 seconds.



*Greater Shearwater*

1977

*Luanne Clark*

**Cory's Shearwater:** prefers warmer waters from Great Eastern Rock (ca. 3 miles east of Montauk Pt.) to several miles SE of Block Island. Does not approach boats closely. In recent years (since 1970) fall flights declining in abundance, but showing a greater tendency to appear before mid-June.

**Manx Shearwater:** increasing in frequency since 1973, the year found breeding in North America for the first time at nearby Penikese I.,















### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of persons contributed information and other assistance toward making this article possible, including Jim Ash, Frank Bader, Bob Dieterich, Steve Dempsey, Dick Ferren, Michel Kleinbaum, Hugh McGuinness, Gordon Meade, Rick Radis, Gil Raynor, Richard Rowlett, P. William Smith, Barbara Spencer, Peter Tozzi, Ben and Joanne Trimble, Janet Witzeman, and Charles Wood.\* A far greater number of people provided companionship, and helped spot and identify birds. Many thanks to one and all, and to Captain Paul Forsberg and his *Viking* crew. *Viva Stercorariidae!*

\*My special thanks to Luanne Clark who sketched the Greater Shearwater expressly for this article, and to Bill Wilson for the use of his excellent photographs.

—9446 85 Road, Woodhaven, New York 11421































































































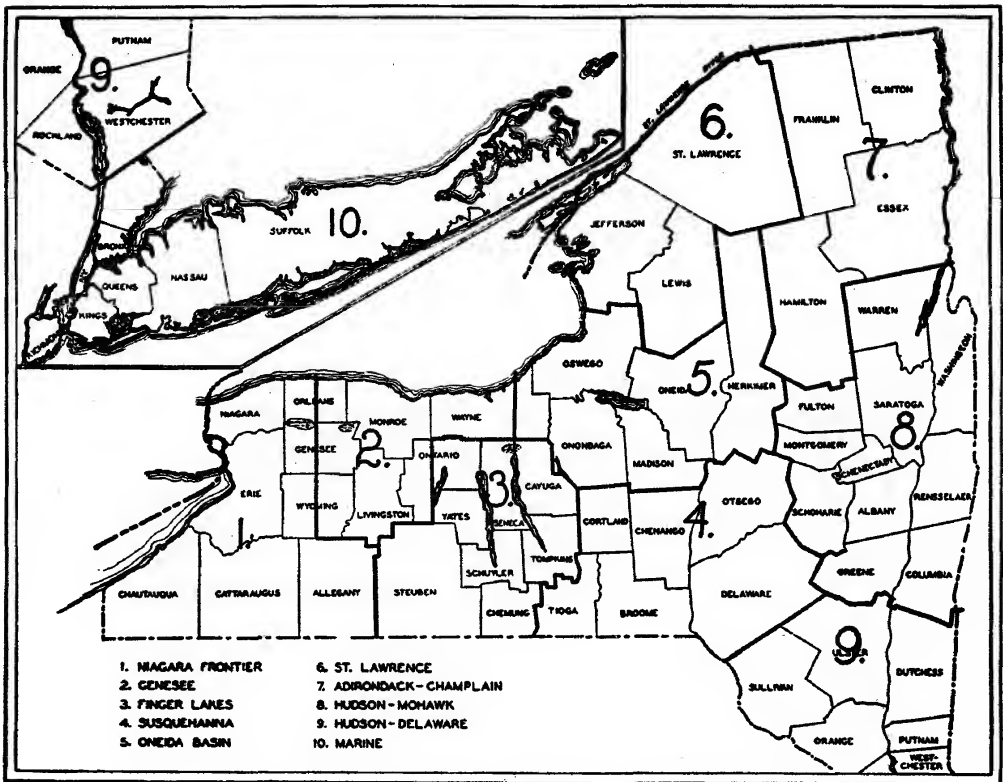








## REPORTING REGIONS



For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. IV Nos. 1 and 2

## REPORTING DEADLINES

Winter Season: December, January, February  
Deadline is March 7

Spring Season: March, April, May  
Deadline is June 7

Summer Season: June, July, August  
Deadline is September 7

Fall Season: September, October, November  
Deadline is December 7

